

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

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CONNECTICUT CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

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"We stand now where two roads diverge. But unlike the roads in Robert Frost's familiar poem, they are not equally fair. The road we have been travelling is deceptively easy, a smooth superhighway on which we progress with great speed, but at its end lies disaster. The other fork of the road--the one 'less travelled by'--offers our last, our only chance to reach a destination that assures the preservation of the earth." -- Rachel Carson in Silent Spring.

NOTICE OF THE 1962 ANNUAL MEETING

TIME: Saturday, November 3, 1962, 10:30 A.M.

PLACE: Overbrook Science Center of the Stamford Museum and Nature Center, Stamford, Connecticut.

To reach the Stamford Museum grounds, leave the Merritt Parkway at Exit #35 and drive north on Rt. 137 about 0.5 mile. The entrance is at the corner of High Ridge Rd. and Scofieldtown Rd.

PROGRAM: Annual Business Meeting, including election of officers and trustees, reports of officers and committees, discussion of the Chapter's program and other business.

LUNCHEON: Bring your own picnic luncheon and beverage. Arrangements will be made for an appropriate place to eat following the meeting.

FIELD TRIPS: After lunch there will be tours of the Natural Area at the Stamford Museum and of the Mianus River Gorge Preserve of the Nature Conservancy. Mianus Gorge is located about a 20 minutes drive from the Stamford Museum grounds.

SUMMER MEETING AT THE BURNHAM BROOK PRESERVE

A turnout of 26 members attended a meeting at the Dolbia Hill Farm in East Haddam on July 28, with the Dick Goodwins as hosts. In the morning a tour of inspection was made to the Burnham Brook Preserve. After a picnic lunch a business meeting was held under the big maple tree.

Announcement was made of a gift of a one-fifth undivided interest in 52 acres to the Nature Conservancy as an addition to the Burnham Brook Preserve, increasing the size of this natural area to 98 acres.

Other business included interim reports on our preserves, and extensive discussion of pesticide problems and of coastal wetlands preservation (see pages that follow).

BANTAM RIVER PROJECT

News has just arrived of the recording of the deeds for two "anchor" pieces of property on the Bantam River in Litchfield. We will hope in our next Newsletter to have a full report on progress with this project, which is pioneering with a legal device to preserve open space through restrictive covenants.

THE PESTICIDE PROBLEM

At the summer meeting of the Connecticut Chapter, the chairman was authorized to appoint a Pesticide Committee to study the pesticide situation in Connecticut and to make its findings available to the membership in the Chapter Newsletter. This Committee now consists of Stephen Collins, Sydney Howe, John Dunning and Dick Goodwin. The following material is a first installment from the Committee.

For all who have not yet seen it, Rachel Carson's new book "Silent Spring", which came out in late September should receive the thoughtful attention of everyone interested in human welfare. It is a most eloquent plea for much greater caution in the use of insecticides. Copies of this book can be obtained at a reduced price (\$4.00, mailing cost and tax included) by mailing a check payable to the Thames Science Center to Dick Goodwin, Connecticut College, New London, Connecticut. The book, which appeared in part in the NEW YORKER in June, is attractively illustrated by two of our members, Lois and Louis Darling.

Here are some facts from the Pesticide Committee: (1) 56,000 acres were sprayed with DDT for gypsy moth alone in the Spring of 1962. Included were watershed lands in Bristol, Waterbury, Hartford and New Haven, and 3,000 acres of State-owned property. (2) At least 11 wildlife kills have been reported this year, data given in the accompanying table. (3) An unusual number of dead thrushes were brought in to the Audubon Nature Center in Greenwich last May; trout in a private aquarium in New Britain, supplied with municipal water, died just at the time of the fish kill reported in a New Britain reservoir. (4) The McLean Game Refuge, one of the State's finest Natural Areas, in Simsbury and Granby was sprayed, despite a considerable effort on the part of Nature Conservancy members to persuade the Trustees to refrain from authorizing this action. A wildlife kill was reported as an aftermath of this spraying (see table). (5) DDT is soluble in distilled water at a concentration of about one part per million. We have no data yet as to whether this level has been reached in any Connecticut reservoir, nor to what extent the potential solubility of insecticides in water may be increased by the presence of the vehicles used as solvents and dispersing agents.

A most significant meeting on "Insect Control and its Implications", sponsored by the Connecticut Forest and Park Association and the Farmington River Watershed Association was held in New Hartford on April 18. Dr. Walter Henson and Dr. David Smith of the Yale University School of Forestry discussed the gypsy moth, its importance to the forests of Connecticut and its control. Their general conclusions were that this pest should be regarded more as a nuisance than an economic threat to our forests. Mr. Richard H. Stroud, Executive Vice President of the Sport Fishing Institute, discussed the effects of broadcast insecticides on fish and wildlife. The general discussion that followed was most informative. Representatives of state agencies, professional ecologists and laymen freely participated. The entire proceedings have been published and are available for 25 cents (10 or more for 20 cents each) post paid, from the office of the Farmington River Watershed Association or from the Botany Department, Connecticut College. If you are interested in this problem you are urged to procure a copy.

A resolution was voted at the Chapter summer meeting to the effect that: the State agencies involved with the aerial spraying of pesticides be requested to publish for public distribution an annual report showing the extent of non-agricultural land sprayed, the resulting damage to fish and wildlife and resulting pollution of any bodies of water.

1962 INSECTICIDE KILLS REPORTED IN CONNECTICUT

Summary of 1962 wildlife losses reported in Conn., known or suspected to have been caused by insecticides:

Location	Date		Spray & Target	Extent Reported	DDT or Other Analysis (parts per million)
	Sprayed	Reported			
McLean Game Refuge Granby & Simsbury	5/17-18	5/21	DDT, gypsy moth	Most frogs along 1 mi. woodland stream; one trout	frogs: 1.5 ppm. trout: 16.9 ppm.
Private yard Granby	5/18	5/20	DDT, gypsy moth	Est. 15,000 bees	not analyzed, direct evidence of DDT
Htfd. MDC Reservoirs #2, 3, 6 & Dyke Pond, W. Htfd.	May	5/25-27	DDT, gypsy moth	1,000+ bass (up to 18"), sunfish & other fish; snake; frogs.	2 bluegills 1.1 ppm., 8 small fish 7.7 ppm., 1 frog 3.3 ppm., 1 snake 27.2 ppm., (Others not anal.)
Private yard New Haven	-	5/24	DDT, (Priv. spraying)	1 robin (starlings found, not analyzed)	26 ppm. in viscera
State Pond, Canton Nature Museum	6/16	6/19	DDT, gypsy moth	sunfish, shiners (number not reported)	not analyzed, direct evidence of DDT
Graziano's Pond Windsor Locks	6/18	6/20	DDT, mosquito	Est. 1,000 bluegills	not analyzed, direct evidence of DDT
Shuttle Meadow Res. New Britain	-	5/6	(orchard sprays)	1,000 fish	water only, not reported (fish too decomposed)
Headwaters Mattabasset River Berlin	5/3-16	5/17	(orchard sprays)	"a few trout"	not analyzed
Canton Children's Nature Museum	6/16	6/17	DDT, gypsy moth	All of 60 Cecropia moth caterpillars in Museum study project.	not analyzed, were fed sprayed leaves
Cherry Brook Canton	-	6/28	DDT (elms)	trout, suckers (number not reported)	not reported
Birmingham Res. Derby	-	-	DDT, gypsy moth	fish (number not reported)	water & vegetation negative (fish too decomposed)

Source of Fish kill data: State Board of Fisheries & Game

COASTAL WETLANDS

The Mystic River Situation. Our last Newsletter described the threat to the upper Mystic River estuary posed by a proposed dredging project adjacent to the Corinne Gallup Marsh Preserve which would give the Old Mystic Marina access to the channel of the River. The Nature Conservancy brought the question of the legality of the permit granted to the Marina by the Water Resources Commission before the Hartford Superior Court. The Court finally upheld the Commission's decision. Our case was ably presented and was most generously supported by public contributions and by our legal counsel. We are now confronted with a further, much more damaging proposal, namely the dredging of a wide channel down the entire length of the upper estuary. The court actions already taken have undoubtedly had a most important educational impact on the thinking of people in the local community and at the State level. It is hoped that we will be in a stronger position to oppose this next proposition.

Governmental Action. As an aftermath of the Old Mystic Marina controversy, a number of somewhat encouraging actions have ensued. Commissioner Joseph Gill of the Council on Agricultural and Natural Resources requested the Nature Conservancy to prepare an inventory of the Coastal Wetlands in the State. This inventory was prepared and was used by Mr. William H. Whyte in the preparation of his report to the Governor entitled "Connecticut's Natural Resources: A Proposal for Action". Mr. Whyte listed coastal wetlands as one of the types of areas most critically in need of preservation. It is indeed urgent that our coastal marshes, both publicly owned and private, be protected from further encroachments. We are indebted to the Southeastern Connecticut Regional Planning Agency for providing detailed surveys of the coastal wetlands from the Rhode Island State line to Lyme.

Progress in Marsh Preservation. We have helped initiate or have aided action groups in various places along our coast. These include: the Mystic Valley Conservation Council, which has been working in the area of the Mystic River estuary; a group in East Lyme; two projects in Lyme; one in Old Saybrook; one in Guilford and one in Branford. Although none of these groups has yet brought its project to the point where firm legal commitments have been made, we are hopeful that some solid accomplishments can be reported in our next Newsletter.

YOU CAN HELP BY

- 1) SUPPORTING THE \$50,000,000 BOND ISSUE FOR OPEN SPACE PROPOSED IN THE WHYTE REPORT.
- 2) WORKING TOWARD THE ESTABLISHMENT OF TOWN CONSERVATION COMMISSIONS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL.
- 3) CONTRIBUTING GENEROUSLY TO THE NATIONAL PROGRAM OF THE NATURE CONSERVANCY.
- 4) PERSUADING A FRIEND TO JOIN THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

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